A 2

SERMON

PREACHED

Upon the 29th of *MAY*,

In the Parish-Church of

St. MARGARET,

IN

Lyn-Regis,

IN

NORFOLK,

In a Great Presence.

By *THO. FYSH*, A.M.

LONDON,

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To the most High, Puissant, and Noble Prince, *Henry* Duke of *Norfolk*; Earl Marshal of *England*; Earl of *Arundel*, *Surrey*, *Norfolk* and *Norwich*; Baron *Howard*, *Mowbray*, *Segrave*, *Brews* of *Gower*, *Fitz-Alan*, *Warren*, *Clun*, *Oswaldestre*, *Matravers*, *Scales*, *Graystock*, *Furneval* of *Sheffield*, and *Howard* of *Castle-Rising*; Constable and Governor of His Majesty's Royal Castle and Honour of *Windsor*; Lord Warden of the Forest of *Windsor*; Lord Lieutenant of *Norfolk*, *Surrey* and *Berks*, and of the City, and County of the City, of *Norwich*, *&c.* High Steward of *Lyn-Regis* in *Norfolk*.

May it please Your Grace,

THis Discourse was design'd to attend and cherish the Publick Devotions of a very Loyal and Worthy Corporation; to which Your Grace has lately vouchsafed to own a Relation, and whose Interests You are pleased to Espouse: But it had the Fortune to wait upon Your Grace, likewise, in the same Solemnity, at the Head of an Illustrious Assembly of Persons of Great Honour and Quality; All full of most Dutiful Affections to His Majesty, and Honourable Thoughts and Veneration of Your Grace.

Coming into the World under ſuch kindly Aſpects, and honeſtly *(however weakly) endeavouring to* ſpeak out *upon an agreeable Argument; it met with a Favour from Your Grace, bigger than it did aſpire to, or could deſerve: Which was, to have Your Repeated Commands for its* Publication. *After this, Duty was to govern and* control *my Inclination; and it became me, on the firſt fitting Occaſion, to lay It and my Self at Your Grace's Feet. This I now do in all Humility: Beſeeching Your Pardon of my Preſumption Herein; Which I am the more encouraged to hope for, when I reflect upon that Great Goodneſs, and Sweetneſs of Temper, which in Your Grace is as Eminent, as Your High Authority and moſt Noble Deſcent. I am,*

My *LORD*,

Your *GRACE'S*

Moſt Obedient Servant,

THO. FYSH.

Zechariah, 12. 8.

In that day the Lord ſhall defend the Inhabitants of Jeruſalem, *and he that is feeble among them at that day ſhall be as* David; *and the Houſe of* David *ſhall be as God, as the Angel of the Lord before them.*

THis day was this Scripture fulfilled to theſe Nations; and he that comes prepared, as he ought, to celebrate this Solemnity, will preſently diſcern, what an eaſie Accommodation thereof may be made to the ſtate of our own Affairs; and that the words afford a ſeaſonable Theme for an holy Panegyrick, and are fit to remind us of thoſe Mercies we here are met to commemorate and acknowledge. Your ſelves, I know, can well transfer them, and make the Application: But if I may contribute any help to this, be pleaſed that we reflect a while on their Ground and Occaſion; which having done with any tolerable Attention, we ſhall grow doubtful (perhaps) whether in *Paleſtine*

or *Britain*, the Scene might be more fitly laid.

God had now brought again the Captivity of *Sion*, and redeemed his choſen Nation from Vaſſallage under haughty Tyrants: and the Mercy was ſo great, and the Joy ſo tranſporting, that it almoſt aſtoniſhed and overwhelmed their Senſe. They were tempted to disbelieve their Eyes, and to ſuſpect it was a Dream of the Night, and not a Viſion of the Day, that entertained them. For the Revolution and Turn of Affairs was ſo wonderfully ſurpriſing and great, ſo unexpected a Face of things did appear, and yet ſo calmly accompliſhed, and ſmoothly brought to
Act. 12.9. paſs, that (like St. *Peter*, when his Chains dropt off at the Angel's Voyce) at firſt they thought their Deliverance but an imaginary thing, fine wrought in the Shop of Fancy, and that (ſurely) it could not be a real Event of things, or a ſolid and ſubſtantial Change.

But when they found that it was a publick and palpable Bleſſing that had befallen them; a Bleſſing, the happy influence whereof every awakned Eye might ſee, and every well affected Heart might feel; what Gladſom

Paſſions

Paſſions then throng'd in their enlarged Breaſts, and warm'd and actuated every Part? How was their Mind raviſhed with the Joy, and how was their Countenance adorned with a pleaſing Grace? How did the waſted Kingdom erect its drooping Head, and the Church new ſtring her Harp, which had ſo long hung upon the Willows in the times of her Deſolations? How did their Mouths ſing out the Praiſes of Him who rules in all the Kingdoms of the Earth, and how did their Hearts glow with Love and Loyal Veneration to *Zerubbabel*, and other Princes of ancient Race? How did all the Sorrows of their paſt Captivity disband and vaniſh, till ſcarce any other Remembrance was left of former Miſeries, than what might heighten the Reliſh of preſent Enjoyments? Nay further, How did the Fame of this ſpread into diſtant Countries, and Foreign Lands: And whether they did envy or congratulate *Judah*'s Happineſs, yet ſtill how were they obliged to ſay, *The Lord had done great things for them?*

And what happy Conſequents did attend and wait upon this Revolution, cannot be better deſcribed, than in our Prophet's Lan-

Ch. 6. 13. guage; The Temple was rebuilt, and the ſolemn Worſhip reſtored; Sanctuaries reſcued from ſhameful Prophanation, and the places Ch. 3. 5. of God's Feet made glorious: The Hierarchy was reſtored, and the Mitre placed upon the High Prieſt's Head, and Plenty was poured down from the Stores of Heaven: Ch. 8. 12. The Vine gave her Fruit, and the Ground her Increaſe, and the Heavens their Dew; Ch. 8. 19. and inſtead of Monthly Faſts, God was to the Houſe of *Judah*, Joy and Gladneſs, and chearful Feaſts.

And now nothing could be added to the greatneſs of their Happineſs, but Continuance and Perpetuity, and a wiſe Proviſion for its laſting and uninterrupted Enjoyment. For Religion would ſoon be loſt, without an eſtabliſhed *Defender of the Faith* (ſucceſſively) to maintain, protect and ſupport it. Peace would be diſhonourable, or ſhort-liv'd, without an Head of Counſel, a Scepter of Juſtice, and a Sword of War to ſecure and guard it. Plenty would expoſe a Nation to be the fatter Prey for Rapine or Ambition from abroad, or incline them to be wanton, or deſirous of Change at home; without the Force of Government to repel the one, and the

the Wiſdom and Authority of it, to check and to curb the other.

And therefore, that Religion, and Peace, and Plenty might be continued to them and their Poſterity, and that God might crown all his other Favours in their Reſtoration, and that no Oppreſſor might go through them any more; God reſolved to ſettle the Government in the hands of a meek and righteous Prince, and to entail the Succeſſion upon his Houſe; and ſo to ſecure them in the Enjoyment of all the Intereſts that could be dear unto them; and by that means, as formerly by the Miniſtery of Angels, to diſpence and convey to them the various Iſſues and Fruits of his Providence and Care. And thus *Zerubbabel* and his Houſe are brought in (as *Adam* was) to govern a World, from which *Chaos* and Confuſion were but lately fled; and to cultivate that Garden of God, whoſe Fences and Walls were now rebuilt and repaired. And this gives us a View of the main Intendment of the words, and alſo of the Intereſt and Share our ſelves may challenge in them. *In that day the Lord ſhall defend*, &c.

In

In my profecuting of which, and the buſineſs of the day, I crave leave to inſiſt upon theſe four following Obſervables.

Firſt, *That it was a Special Act of Providence that brought about this Change in the Jewiſh, and our Affairs:* In that day the Lord ſhall defend the Inhabitants of *Jeruſalem.*

Secondly, *That thereby the State of a Kingdom, and of a Prince, from feeble and weak, became as* David.

Thirdly, *That hereby the Government was eſtabliſhed, not only in a ſingle Prince, but in his Lineage and Houſe:* The Houſe of *David* ſhall be as God.

Fourthly, *The happy Influences this Government ſhould have upon the Subjects of it; and this illuſtrated by the gracious Conduct of the Angel (of old) that went before the Camp of* Iſrael.

Firſt, *That it was a Special Act of Providence*, &c. Ut ſupra.

Providence chiefly exerciſes it ſelf about Humane Affairs in three ways.

1. Permiſſively.
2. Directively.
3. By way of Energy, and Efficacy.

1. In

1. In the way of Sufferance and bare Permiſſion. This I the rather remark, becauſe we have been ſadly ſenſible, how perverſly and impiouſly ſome have alledged the Argument of Providence: when God was ſaid to vouch the things which he abhorred, and Heaven was forced to father the wicked and the monſtrous Brats of Earth: when Proceedings were juſtified, as the Great Turk does his, purely by the Succeſs. As if Crimes ceaſed to be ſuch, when they once grew great, proſperous and incorrigible; As if Good and Ill, Right and Wrong, Juſt and Unjuſt, were to be meaſured by the length of the Sword, or the ſtrength of a Party; not by the eternal and unchangeable Standards of Equity and Reaſon, and the Obligation of Divine and Humane Laws; As if God's ſecret Inſpirations could whiſper Contradictions to his revealed Will; and the ſame pure, heavenly Source and Fountain could ſend forth ſweet Waters and Bitter; As if God approved every thing, which he does not forthwith puniſh; and to ſuſpend his Thunderbolts, were a full Evidence of his Love.

No doubt can be made, but that whatever Evil or Calamity there is in a City, 'tis permitted

permitted by the wiſe Ruler of the World, in order to reform the Guilts, or improve the Graces of thoſe 'tis inflicted on, or to revenge God's juſt Quarrel on an ungrateful Nation. But then it would be conſidered, that an Executioner is oft-times not the leaſt of Criminals, and that the very Office is ſo vile and ignoble, that generous and good Natures diſdain and abhor it. Thence it was, that God ſuffered the Venemous Tail of a Nation to laſh and ſcourge the Head, and the more noble parts of it, and did not forcibly interpoſe, to ſtop that Malice and Treachery, which he grievouſly hates, and has ſeverely forbidden: for thus Man, in his lower Dominion over the Works of God's Hands, admits of the Savage Cruelty, or Brutal Rage of one Creature, to tame, or to ſubdue another. Nor can this in any wiſe be colourably proved, to ſtamp the Divine Allowance on unrighteous practices, though it do demonſtrate the Divine Wiſdom, in making the worſt things (ſome way or other) ſubſervient to its own holy Purpoſes, and great Deſigns.

2. Again; The Providence of God, with a watchful Care, directs and ſuperintends all Events

Events below; and (eſpecially) with a concerned and jealous Eye, applies it ſelf to the Riſe and Fall of Kingdoms and Empires, the Advancement or Decay of States or Commonwealths: Inſomuch, that they who have been let into the Secrets of God's Counſels (as *Daniel*, and the Prophets of old) have there ſeen the exact and fatal Schemes of their flouriſhing or declining Eſtate, and the moſt conſiderable Periods of their Fortune in following Ages and Generations.

And this is of mighty Uſe to the great Purpoſes of Religion; for it impreſſes upon Men awful Apprehenſions concerning God; it engages them to look up beyond the Sphere and Activity of ſecond Cauſes (which ever moving in a lower and circumſcribed Orb, muſt follow the Sway and Revolution of the great firſt Mover,) it aſſures them that they are not abandoned to the Caſualties of blind Fortune, or the Violences of unreaſonable Men; but are ſtill (in their greateſt Extremities) under the wiſe Diſpoſals of a gracious God. This, finally, in the Succeſs even of lawful Enterprizes, calls upon Men, to give unto God the Honour due to his Name; not to ſacrifice to their Net, or burn Incenſe to

their Dragg, or aſcribe happy Events wholly to the reach of their Counſels, or the puiſſance of their Arms.

3. But then, above and beyond both theſe, there is in ſome Revolutions, a ſignal and efficacious Interpoſal of Providence, bringing about things in ſo ſurpriſing ways, as that they are not only above the viſible Power, but againſt the Tendency of lower and ſecond Cauſes.

Upon which Score we may warrantably affirm, that they bear the Marks and Signatures of a Contrivance and Production Divine; and as a Child ſometimes challenges the Father by uncommon Features and Reſemblances, ſo theſe ſpeak themſelves the Offſpring and Iſſue of Heavenly Power and Love. For thus the Beauty, or wonderful Greatneſs of a Work, and the ſtrange way of effecting it; the diſproportion of it to ſecond Cauſes, or its Contrariety to the Springs and Principles of their accuſtomed Motions; The univerſal Good it ſheds around, beyond all humane Hopes and Expectations: Theſe, and ſuch as theſe, I take to be Characters of Divine Interpoſals in Energetical Ways, or elſe it ſeems hard to me to prove that God does

does ſpecially intereſt himſelf in the Management of Humane Affairs, ſince Miracles ceaſed, and Immediate Revelations were of no longer uſe and neceſſity.

Now thus it happened to *Judah*, and to us, in our happy Reſtoration; and we (as they) muſt own that God himſelf was on our ſide, and has done great things for us, whereof we rejoyce.

In their Caſe, 'tis well known, that *Cyrus* iſſued out an unaccountable Proclamation for the *Jews* to return to their own Land, and to rebuild their Temple, and to fortifie their City, and beſtowed on them Wealth, and enabled them with Commiſſions to carry on the Work.

What now would his States-men ſay? What ſtrange Counſel (ſhall we call it,) or rather, What Frenzy is this that now governs the King? thus againſt all Rules of Intereſt and Honour, to diſmiſs a People inured to his Service, by ſeventy years Captivity: A People too, of Religion and Rites different from, and reproachful to, the *Perſian* Worſhip; while many conquered Nations of our own Religion are yet detained in hard Subjection. But if the Slaves muſt go, let

them firſt be ſqueezed of their Wealth, and deprived of Opportunities to revolt: Let their City remain Diſmantled, and their Walls in Ruins; and then, if they prove ſlippery, they may eaſily be reduced. But ſhall they who ought to be Slaves for ever, or to purchaſe their Freedom at vaſt Rates, be cheaply diſmiſſed, and ſent home laden with *Perſian* Wealth, and ſo be put into a Capacity to fight us with our own Weapons? Thou great *Cyrus!* Surely thy wonted Conduct has forſaken thee, and a long Courſe of proſperous Succeſs has rendred thee forgetful of the common Rules of Policy.

No, no! God had the Heart of this mighty Prince in his Hand, and inſpired him with kind Thoughts to a Captive People: He who diſſolves the Snowy Mountains into kindly Rivers (from the South) to enrich the barren Land, brooded upon the Spirit of this *Perſian* Monarch, and melted down his Rigours into warm Affections to his ancient People; And thence our Prophet ſays, that *They returned not by Might, nor by Power, but by the Spirit of the Lord.* *Ch.* 4. 6.

As we have heard, ſo have we ſeen, in the City of our God, in the *Jeruſalem* of our *Iſrael*,

rael, God upholdeth the ſame for ever. He calmed the Rage of a Mutinous and Fanatick Army, and ſent a Spirit of Diviſion among the Leaders and Chiefs of proſperous Uſurpation, as of old he did between *Abimelech* and the Men of *Sichem*; and at that Breach, made way for his Anointed to enter. He made a little Cloud from the North (of deſpiſed and neglected Beginnings) grow and increaſe to vaſt and formidable Dimenſions, and, after it had hover'd a while over a doubtful Nation, made it to diſcloſe from its darkſome Womb, a happy Shower that bleſt and enriched all the Land. He confounded the Subtilty of the Crafty, and broke the Forces of the Strong, and diſſolved the Combinations and Confederacies of thoſe, whom Intereſt, and Ambition, and common Guilts, and Fears had long cemented together. He charmed the Paſſions of an Head-ſtrong and Tumultuous People, till thoſe very daring Factions, which, with Armed Legions, had broke into the Quarters of well-intrenched Monarchy, were all ſubdued under the Feet of an Unarmed, and a Peaceful King. He gave him a Triumph, without a Fight; and a compleat Victory, without Reſiſtance or Engage-

Jud. 9. 23.

Engagement: And thus (as anciently) the Mountains before *Zerubbabel* were made plain, and no Road but was paſſable, when God and Angels led the way.

Thus were *Judah*, and We, led out of ſad Bondage, to Freedom and to Peace, to Laws and Religion in our Native Land: And by the greatneſs of the Work, and the littleneſs of the Humane Helps inſtrumental in it, we ſafely may conclude, it was God's Doing, and that God in that day did defend the Inhabitants of *Jeruſalem*.

Secondly, *That thereby the State of a Kingdom, and the Condition of a Prince, from feeble, became as* David.

1. As to the ſtate of the Kingdom. And here (without any Figures or Aggravations) it may be juſtly affirmed, that the *Lamentations*, *Jeremy* made to condole the *Jewiſh* Captivity, ſuted us in almoſt every part; and where we fell ſhort in the exactneſs of the Paralell, we out-vyed them in the bitterneſs of our Miſery.

They were carried Captives into a ſtrange Land, but it was by the Chance of an Open and Generous War; and however, they were

were in Servitude under a mighty Monarch, who was the Terror of the whole World: But we, by unnatural Diſcord and ſeditious Inſurrection, became Slaves to our Servants and Mercenaries, as the *Egyptians* were once enſlaved by their own *Mamalukes.* We had the Vexation to ſee that loathſom Plague renewed, Frogs croaking in our King's Palaces, and Creatures of a low and degenerous Race infeſting the Seats of Majeſty and Honour.

That hateful and unſeemly thing was our ſad Portion, *which, Solomon* ſays, *diſquiets the whole Earth, and which it cannot bear, A Servant when he reigns, and a Fool when he is filled with Meat:* And our Kingdom underwent St. *Peter's* way of Crucifixion, with its Head downwards, and the Heels aloft. Mechanicks ſet up for Rulers and Chiefs, and Muſhromes grew up to Majeſtick Pride, as if we were to be, not only the Mark of Fortune's Malice, but the Matter of her Merriment and Scorn. We needed not then a Foreign Country to be Captives in, our own was worſe than *Babylon*, a Stage of greater Miſery and Confuſion: and wherever then you caſt your Eyes, they were met with a ſad and a diſmal Proſpect. *Prov.* 30. 21, 22.

The

The Beauty of Holineſs was all ſullied and beſmeared, and the more raſh and neglectful Addreſſes to God were, by ſo much more religious was the Worſhip eſteemed. Cruelty was taken to be Zeal, and Sacrilege and Villany were liſted under the Colours of Reformation. The Remnant of the Royal Party that was left, (at length) began to envy thoſe that fell in the High Places of the Field, rather than thus ſurvive, to ſee Faction rampant, and Rebellion proſperous; God's Prophets perſecuted, and his Service aboliſhed, and his Temples prophaned, and his Sacred Vicegerent, by Impious Hands, barbarouſly ſlain. Had *Babylon* any Miſeries comparable to the Arbitrary Tyrannies of *Select Committees*, and *High Courts of Juſtice*, and Pretence of *Martial Law*? What a hard Bondage was this, when but to queſtion the Juſtice of their Proceedings was turned into a Plot againſt the State; and to debate the Legality of a Tax, did merit a Decimation? Whatever Treaſures, or precious Veſſels were carried away from *Jeruſalem*, as the Spoils of War, fell far ſhort, in value, of the prodigious Fruits of the long Rapine, Plundering and Sacrilege, which were exerciſed Here: For, upon

upon fair Calculation, it was computed that, before ever the Uſurper came to ſway, in eight Years time, forty Millions had been raiſed by the Grandees of Parliament; which was judged more Money than had been levied on the Subject, in all the Monarchs Reigns, ſince the *Norman* Conqueſt, till that time. Were the Jews compelled to ſpeak a ſtrange Language? So were we. Miſcreants of the blackeſt Hew, we were taught to call Saints and Precious Ones; a Cabal of Arbitrary Grandees, were now ſtyled Keepers of our Liberties; Juncto's of Bloody and Cruel Men, a Committee of Safety; the common Bouteſeau's and Incendiaries of State, Aſſertors of our Laws, and Patriots of our Country; Demure Cant, and Hypocritical Jargon, went by the name of powerful and awakening Goſpelling. Were Attempts made to enſlave them in their Conſciences, as well as Bodies? So it was here, and ſevere things threatned and inflicted on all that would not fall down and worſhip the Idol of Liberty and Reformation which they had ſet up; and which were as much what they pretended to be, as *Nebuchadnezzar's* Image was a true God. However, to eſtabliſh their Ini-

quity and Uſurpation as ſure as they could, they impoſed Impious Engagements, and Oaths of Abjuration of the Royal Line, as if they were reſolved to puſh fair for Men's Eternal Ruin, as well as Temporal.

And now the Affairs and Intereſts of the Royal Party were at a very low Ebb, and no Glimpſe of Hope appeared from any Quarter or Region round about. Even thoſe that were moſt Loyally inclined, found that, by ſtrugling in the Toyls, they were more fatally entangled; and while they played on the Game with an Unfortunate Hand, inſtead of retrieving what was loſt, they only made new Additions to the Power and Courage of the Adverſary. All therefore they could do, was, to ſit down and weep by the Waters of their Captivity, when they remembred *Sion*, and to joyn with the Guardian-Angel of the Land, who doubtleſs (as it is in the 1ſt Chapter of this Prophecy at the 12th Verſe) ſympathized with the piteous Calamities of its Charge, and would ſollicite Heaven in ſome ſuch Pious Expoſtulation as this.

How long, O Lord of Hoſts! How long wilt thou not have Mercy on Jeruſalem, *and on the Cities*

Cities of Judah, *againſt which thou haſt had Indignation this twenty Years? Look down from Heaven, and behold thy Church in Ruins, and thy Vicegerent hunted as a Partridge on the Mountains, and thy Goſpel proſtituted to the Luſts of Wretched Hypocrites, or Ambitious Men; and the whole Land overflown with Guilt, or Fears, or Blood. How long wilt thou be wroth with thy People that prays, and hide thy Face in an angry Cloud from* Judah *thy Sanctuary, and* Iſrael *thy Poſſeſſion? Thou, indeed, haſt been juſtly diſpleaſed at us; But what are theſe Uſurpers that are at Eaſe, that they thus help forward, and aggravate our Affliction? Up then, Lord, and let not Man have the Upper Hand; Let not the Sword devour for ever, nor Violence and Confuſion be entailed on us and our Heirs for evermore. Remember, that the Wrongs done to thy Anointed below, take Heaven at their Rebound; and that he cannot be innocent to his God, who is an Offender againſt his King. Pity a Nation that has no Pity upon it ſelf, and ſcatter the People that delight in War; and do Thou, Lord, help in Trouble, for Vain is the Help of Man. 'Tis a Cauſe now fit for thee to appear in; and ſince all other Medicines fail, diſpenſe to us out of the Treaſures of Thy*

own Goodneſs and Benignity. None now can Rival Thee in any Part of the Glory of the Work; and Thou wilt thereby ſignalize thy Power, no leſs than thy Pity and Compaſſion. Let thy Hand be upon the Man of thy Right Hand, and on that Royal Perſon, whom thou ſo miraculouſly preſervedſt for thy own Self. Make good the Happy Omens and Glorious Preſages at his Birth, and convince the World, that the Heavens did not then ſmile on him in vain; Settle us again upon the old Foundations, and let not a Nation, whom thou haſt formerly ſignalized by a Train of Illuſtrious Mercies and Protections, become the Scorn and Deriſion of our Enemies round about us.

Such were the ſorrowful Accents, and pious Breathings of God's Angels, and Godly Men; and at length, to ſhew the prevalency of thoſe Chriſtian Weapons, Prayers and Tears, kind Heaven graciouſly was pleaſed to hearken; and on the ſudden, removed all our Miſery, and took away our Reproach; and, as *David*, by an unexpected Unction, was taken from following the Ewes great with Young, to feed *Jacob* God's People, and *Iſrael* his Inheritance; ſo here, a new, and far

far more glorious Scene did preſently open and diſcloſe; and the Royal Intereſt, *from feeble*, and almoſt forlorn, *became as* David; and God, by a mighty, but gentle Spirit, turned our Captivity as the Rivers in the South: And (as in the World's firſt Creation) out of a Maſs of Matter, dark and diſorderly, blended and confuſed, of jarring and diſagreeing Natures, he produced a comely and well compacted Fabrick of Government, in Church and State, which ſhould move orderly, and miniſter to the Good of each particular Being.

2. As to the Condition of our Prince: None ever ſo like *David* as He, in Dangers, and Deliverances, and unexpected Advancement. What though he was deſtined to a Crown, by Divine Appointment and Decree; who would not yet have preferred any private Station, with Security, before it? rather than for ever (on the Account of that Eminence) be perſecuted by the jealous Rage of *Saul*, and the virulent Calumnies of *Doeg*, and the fierce Inſurrections of *Sheba*, and the unnatural Rebellion of *Abſalom*. Unravel the Hiſtory of both thoſe Royal Perſons, and tell me if any two Characters do ſo juſtly agree:

How were Both couped up one while in ſuch a Cave, another in ſuch a Wood; forced haſtily to flee to *Moab*, and to *Gath*, and (thanks to that Providence that takes care of Kings) found more Kindneſs and Shelter among uncircumciſed *Philiſtines*, than their own Subjects, in their Rightful Dominions? How did both receive in themſelves, each Moment, the Sentence of Death, by new Dangers, and frightful Alarms? And how were both ſometimes in the greateſt Perplexity and Doubt, which they ought moſt to be jealous of, the Violence of implacable Enemies, or the Treachery of pretended Friends.

But why do I thus lay open the Diſtreſſes of Sacred Majeſty, to our own great Diſhonour? Let dark Shades for ever be drawn over the Viſage of thoſe Times; let them never ſee the Light: Let us no longer ſee ſuch Misfortunes diſplay'd, as upbraid our Guilts no leſs than move our Pity; but let us turn our Eyes on *David*, Crowned in *Hebron*, from his Exile in *Gath*. He asked Life of God, and He, with Life, beſtowed the Poſſeſſion of a Crown in Peace: He ſubdued the People under him, and the Nations under his Feet, and there remained no Strife at all,

all, but a Dutiful and Loyal Emulation, who ſhould be the Firſt in bringing back the King. And now the Daughter of *Sion* might well rejoyce greatly, when her King came in ſuch a meek and peaceful way; not in confuſed Noiſes of War, not in Garments rolled in Blood: He came as the Rain into a Fleece of Wool, and the Gentleneſs of his Entrance was, at once, an Earneſt, and a Shadow of the future Grace and Goodneſs of his Government. And thus it appears, that the State of our Kingdom, and the Condition of our Prince, *From feeble, became as* David. Which was the ſecond Thing.

Thirdly, The next is, *That hereby the Government was eſtabliſhed, not only in a Single Perſon, but in his Lineage and Houſe*; The Houſe of *David* ſhall be as God.

What Aſpect this may have upon the Spiritual Kingdom of the *Meſſiah*, and what the Myſtical Intendment and Senſe in that regard may be, I will not now enquire; but with an Eye to the Temporal Government of the Houſe of *David*, I muſt conſider wherein they ſo reſemble God, as that it may be accommodated to Soveraign and Hereditary Princes at large. Now

Now here I muſt firſt premiſe, that Scriptures themſelves do aſcribe to them ſome Shadows of Divine Excellencies and Perfections, and ſo alſo do the Sages of our Municipal Laws; leſt any ſhould pertly here object, that this Divinity is broached only by Court-Chaplains, or Penſioners to Prerogative.

The Inſpired Writings ſay, that it is God whom Soveraign Powers do repreſent, that it is by the Beams of his Majeſty they ſhine, that He has ſaid They are Gods, that he puts the Sword of Juſtice in their Hands, that 'tis his Throne they fill, and that Obedience to them is enforc'd upon their Subjects by virtue of a Divine Authority and Command.

And the Skilful in our Laws ſay, That the Common Law, by way of Similitude, attributes to the King a Shadow of Divine Excellencies, becauſe he repreſents the Perſon of God, and bears his Image. As (for inſtance) Soveraignty, all Lands being held of him; Power, he commanding his Subjects to go out of the Realm to War, or making Foreign Coin Current by his Proclamation; Majeſty, he neither taking, nor parting with any Thing, without Matter of Record, except Chattels,

Chattels, or ſuch like, below the Regard of Law; Infiniteneſs, after a certain manner, being preſent in all his Courts, and, as it were, in all places of his Dominions; Perpetuity, having perpetual Succeſſion, and being not ſubject to dye; Perfection, for no Laches, Folly, Infancy, or Corruption of Blood can be judged in him; Truth, he cannot be eſtopped; Juſtice, He cannot be a Diſſeizor, or do any Wrong.

Theſe things I find vouch'd from ſuch Authorities, as that they ſeem to me, to be Eſſential to our Conſtitution, and to be as good a Comment, as one would wiſh, on that Branch of the Text, now under Conſideration, that *The Houſe of* David *ſhould be as God*; intimating many high and excellent Prerogatives, they were inveſted in, and encircled withal.

But I muſt confine my Diſcourſe to narrower Bounds, and therefore ſhall inſiſt only on theſe two things.

1. That in the Monarchy, reſembling God, the Perſons in Power were truly Supream, ἀνυπεύθυνοι, unaccountable to any, as God can be compelled by none, nor be made accountable to them.

2. That they reſembled him in a kind of Immortality; The King never died, the Monarchy was Succeſſive and Hereditary.

1. They reſemble God in being, ἀνυπεύθυνοι, truly Supream and Unaccountable. Some learned Men will have this to have been the main difference betwixt the Judges that governed *Iſrael*, and the Kings of the Houſe of *David*, That the former were to render an Account to the State, of the Adminiſtration of their Government, which the latter were not to do, but to God only. The very nature of the thing (indeed) proves it ſelf ſufficiently: For, wherever Soveraign Power is once lodged (becauſe for the *Spartan* Shadows of a King, and the Dukes of *Venice*, I am not concerned to account here) there is evidently veſted a Freedom from all forcible Controll or Coertion: And if *David* and his Race were Kings over all *Iſrael*, they had the eminent controlling Authority over the ſcattered, or united Power of the Body-Politick; and ſo no *Sanhedrim*, no Aſſembly, no Conſent of the People, no Officers of State, can be above them, in the way of proper Rule or Juriſdiction; and violently to touch them in the very Skirts of their Mantle, is hugely culpable and criminal.

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On the account of this Eminence, they are fenced and immured by the Laws, both of Earth and Heaven, from the undutiful Thought, and the ſawcy Tongue, as well as the rebellious and aſſaſſinating Hand. We are not to curſe the King, ſo much as in Thought, and we are not to revile the Gods, or ſpeak Evil of the Rulers of the People: And blaſpheming God, and the King, were Crimes that went coupled, and hand in hand; and St. *Paul* recanted a raſh Word ſpoken againſt a Perſon in Power, though horribly abuſing it: And 'tis ſuppoſed that the old War of the Giants againſt the Gods, meant no more than Inſurrections of mighty Subjects againſt their Kings: Sure we are, that, in a Divine Senſe, 'tis no leſs than Reſiſting the Ordinance of God, to reſiſt them; and *They that reſiſt, ſhall receive to themſelves Damnation.*

And the Chriſtian Duty of Paſſive Obedience, and Non-Reſiſtance, has unſhaken Foundations, and inviolable Grounds, in the Eternal Laws of Nature and Equity; in the Eſſential Frame and Subordination of Politick Societies to ſome Supream; in the Inſpired Writings of the Old and New Teſta-

ment; in the Examples of the Holy Jeſus, and his meek Diſciples; in the Canons of the Church, and the Statutes of the Realm; in the Monuments of Primitive Chriſtianity, and the Sufferings of the moſt celebrated Martyrs.

As to this laſt, I confeſs, ſome have gone about to blaſt the Martyrs Lawrels, and repreſent them to have undergone their Sufferings, becauſe they were weak in their Force, or in their Underſtandings; and ſo they fooliſhly, or helpleſly ſubmitted to what could not be redreſt.

And thus their Memories are Martyr'd, as their Bodies were before, and thoſe illuſtrious paſſive Graces of Meekneſs and Reſignation, of Chriſtian Patience and Taking up the Croſs, which are the bright Enamel of their Heavenly Crowns, which are the juſt Imitation of our Suffering Lord, which are the Eternal Theme of our Wonder and our Praiſe, which (in the Opinion of truly Good Men) do embalm their Names below; and which above have preferred them to the higheſt Seats in the Church Triumphant. Theſe, I ſay, are made to dwindle into mere politick Compliance with a helpleſs Neceſſity; or are arraigned

arraigned, as Arguments of the Weakneſs of their Party, or their Ignorance of their Rights and Privileges: which Modern Profeſſors (it ſeems) pretend now far better to underſtand, in theſe Days of New-Light, and by thoſe extraordinary late Diſcoveries that have been made to the Kingdom of the Saints.

Suffice it us, that we know the ancient Channel, wherein Chriſtianity ran; how it was propagated, and prevailed in the World, when it went forth conquering, and to conquer; and yet knew nothing of making its Way by Violence or Armies; by depoſing of Kings, or fighting for Privileges; by Alterations of Governments, or Diſ-inheriſon of Princes; that is, in plain Engliſh, when it was not acquainted with advancing Chriſt's Cauſe, by reproaching his Religion, or breaking any of his Commandments.

As for us, who adhere to the Eſtabliſhment in the Church of *England*: It has hitherto been our juſt Glory (of which, none hereafter, I hope, ſhall deprive us) that, like the Wiſdom from above, our Doctrines are pure, and our Principles and Practices peaceable; oppoſite to Idolatry againſt God, and Sedition againſt the King: And as this Church has

has hitherto been, ſo may it for ever ſtand, the juſt Dread and Envy of our Enemies on either hand, and be a laſting Monument of the true Temper and Genius of the Chriſtian Religion, till Time ſhall be no more.

But now, becauſe we have exempted Soveraigns from being juſtly obnoxious to Outward Force or Violence, have we therefore cancell'd all Obligations upon them? Have we made mere Power to be Right, or Paſſion to be Law; or left Appetite to range, without either Rule or Bounds; and ſo put them into ſuch a State, as is proper to none but the Great *Leviathan*; who, with full and Arbitrary Liberty, rowls and ſports himſelf in his Watry Kingdom, and at pleaſure Preys upon all the Leſſer, and Defenceleſs Fry.

Surely 'tis not reaſonable, thus to underſtand us. May not their Conſciences be bound, though their Hands cannot? Is not every lower Orb limited and circumſcribed by that which is above it; and though they be higher than the higheſt on Earth, yet ſtill in Heaven is there not one higher than they? *Seneca*, of old, hath wiſely and gravely told them,

them, *Quicquid a vobis minor extimeſcit, major hoc vobis Dominus minatur; Omne ſub Regno graviore Regnum eſt.* However they have no Peer on Earth, in their own Dominions, they are nevertheleſs Subjects of Heaven: and therefore they may, on that Score, lye under the the Obligation of publick Promiſes, and ſolemn Acts of Condeſcenſion: They may be tyed by ſacred Vows and Oaths, by the Senſe of Honour and Religion; by the prudent Care of their Temporal, and an awful Regard to their Eternal, Intereſts; by the Engagements of Juſtice, and Wiſdom, and Tenderneſs, and Humanity: for even God himſelf, the great Potentate of the whole Univerſe, is not Arbitrary in any Exorbitant way; but he forms the Awful Decrees and Reſolves of his Almighty Will and Pleaſure, by the Eternal Laws and Meaſures, of Rectitude, and Goodneſs, and Holineſs, and Compaſſion.

2. The Houſe of *David* reſembled God, in a kind of Immortality: The King never dyed, the Monarchy being Succeſſive and Hereditary.

As Monarchy is the beſt of Governments, for Order, Peace, Strength, Steadineſs and Fixation,

Fixation, ſo the Deſcent of this high Office, in the way of an Inheritance, is the beſt of Monarchies. And therefore, when God eſtabliſhed a Government among his own People, he ſetled it in *David*'s Houſe for many future Years, and a great while to come: He promiſed, that when his own Days were fulfilled and he ſhould ſleep with his Fathers, yet he would ſet up of the Royal Progeny and Seed after him, and eſtabliſh the Throne of his Kingdom for ever; and this that holy Prince magnifies very much in the Favour of God towards him, that he had not only brought him to the Crown, that was but a ſmall thing, in compariſon of eſtabliſhing the Kingdom in his Line, and his Houſe, *in longinquum*, for many ſucceeding Ages and Generations. And thence it is, that we meet ſo often with the mention of the Blood-Royal, the Seed, the Progeny, and the Race of Kings, in the Hiſtorical Books of the Old Teſtament.

2 *Sam.* 7. *per tot.*

Hereby God wiſely prevents a *Vacuum*, or Gap in Government, which in Polities and Societies, does oftimes breed as prepoſterous and violent Changes, as it does in Nature, and at which, much Diſorder and Confuſion

is

is too apt to enter: Which muſt be confeſſed by all, who remember the many Tumults, dangerous Ferments, and Convulſions, that inſeparably wait upon the Intervals of Government in Elective Kingdoms or Principalities.

So that if, on one hand, there be a hazard of perſonal Inſufficiency for the high Charge, on the other, there is almoſt a Certainty of laſting Miſchiefs, by the high Animoſities of claſhing Factions, and different Pretenders; and the notorious Sway, and mighty Aſcendant, that Intereſt and partial Affections have in the Management of Elections, and free Choices, do ballance, at leaſt, the perſonal Defects or Inconveniences in the way of Deſcent and Succeſſion. And when the Trees went out to chuſe their King, the Bramble carried it from the fat Olive, the ſweet Fig-Tree, and the gladſom Vine.

But further, It ought to be conſidered, that if Children, and the Fruit of the Womb be (in general) a Gift and Heritage that cometh of the Lord, that then it ſeems utterly unlikely, that God ſhould abandon to Nature, and the fickle Laws of Generation, the Diſpoſal of, and Succeſſion into that high

Office, which is the Instrument of so many of his Providences to this lower World, and of so mighty Importance and Concernment to the Affairs of his Church and his Religion.

So that, if by such special Direction and Superintendence of Providence, it may be rationally concluded, that the Matter is from God, then we may be confident it will be more blessed, than the wisest of Men's Expedients or Inventions without, or against him. And there must surely be somewhat extraordinary in it, that when God threatens his severest Vengeance against the Nation of the *Philistins*, one part of it should be, to have the King perish from *Gaza*, and a Bastard to dwell in *Ashdod*.

Zech. 9. 5, 6.

They who set up the Spurious *Abimelech*, rejoyced in him for a while, and *Abimelech* rejoyced in them; but this Sun-shine ended in very foul Weather, and the Matter had a sad and Tragical Period and Catastrophe; for a Fire was enkindled in short time between them, and devoured and consumed them both, and revenged the Injuries they had done, by their wicked Combination against *Jerubbaal* and his House, with whom they had dealt untruly and unsincerely.

Judg. 9. 19, 20.

How

How much better then is it, when God takes the Matter into his own Hand, and, together with Inherent Blood and Birthright, conveys and entails the Right to a Crown; and the ſame Providence that deſigns the Being, aſſigns the Station, he muſt hold, and the great Character he muſt ſuſtain and manage. This, of old, I am ſure, was frankly owned and recognized by St. *Ambroſe* and St. *Auguſtine*, Learned, as well as Good, Men; *Cujus juſſu naſcuntur Homines, ejus juſſu conſtituuntur Principes, inde illis Poteſtas unde Spiritus.* They thought that God, not only inſtituted the Office, and was the Fountain of the Authority, but was intereſſed too in the Deſignation of the Perſon, in whom it ſhould be inveſted. Nor did they think it ſuch a horrid Impeachment of a wiſe and gracious Providence, that Princes were ſometimes ſent to fill the Throne, who in Piety, or Gentleneſs, or other Princely Vertues, fell far ſhort of the Perfections of a *Conſtantine*, or a *Theodoſius*.

But the great Iniquity in the canvaſing Queſtions of this ſort, ſeems to be, That Men conſider only the preſent Advantage or Security they propoſe; not the laſting Settle-

ment, or true Right of things; for if thoſe were ſearch'd into, (methinks) 'tis palpable and plain, that Foundations can neither be *ſafely* nor *juſtly* altered: Not *Safely*, becauſe they who new model Kingdoms, muſt firſt force them, and crumble them into pieces, ere they can fit and diſpoſe them for a new Fabrick; and this will bring in ſuch dreadful Shakings and Convulſions, as may endanger the very Being of the Body Politick; and raiſe ſuch violent Fermentations, as may go near to diſſipate and deſtroy the whole. Not *Juſtly*, becauſe Fundamental Laws that concern the Rights of Empire, and that relate to the Original Conſtitution of Things, and that fix and cut out the Channels, wherein for ever they were to run; Theſe, I ſay, cannot be altered without the Violation of thoſe Grounds and Laws of Reaſon, and Equity, and Social Life, which ſupport and protect all Publick Eſtabliſhments and Intercourſes of Men. And if this might be attempted at the Inſtigation of any number of Fellow-Members of the ſame Society, againſt the Band of Union or Government, which ſecures the Whole, 'tis plain, all Original Conventions or Rights are laid by, as Inſignificant

cant and Invalid, and then Matters come to Force and the Hoſtilities of Anarchy; and Conſcience, and Moral Honeſty, will be loſt, as well as Order and publick Peace.

To obviate, if poſſible, this intolerable Evil, Oaths of Succeſſion, and ſacred Tyes of Allegiance, have been impoſed upon Subjects, to Kings and their Heirs; and then all Lawful Rights and Titles are adopted into a Religious Sacredneſs and Obligation; and the Duty is then enforced by a Supervening Awe and Dread of the Avenging Juſtice of that God, who would have *Cæſar's* Rights rendred to *Cæſar*, as well as his own to himſelf.

But, to conclude this Point; If we would find ſure Expedients to engage the Divine Favour, let us not grow diſtruſtful of his Providence, nor run counter to his Will; and, becauſe we apprehend the Ark of God does totter or threaten to fall, in a raſh, unwarrantable Zeal, ſtretch out our bold, unconſecrated Hands upon the viſible Symbol of the Divine Preſence, And ſo I go to

The Fourth and Laſt Obſervable in the Words.

The happy Influences, this Government ſhould have upon the Subjects of it; and this illuſtrated by the Gracious Conduct of the Angel of Old, that went before the Camp of Iſrael; *which is called, The Angel of the Divine Preſence, and which conducted the* Iſraelites *out of* Egypt, *into the Promiſed Land.*

Vide Dr. *Hammond*, in 1 *Cor.* 10. 1.

This hovered over, and overſhadowed them like a Tent: Sometimes it appeared as a Pillar of a Cloud, for it was dusky and dark, when maſter'd and out-ſhined by the Sun's more powerful Rays; and ſometimes as a Pillar of Fire, when, like the Stars, it recover'd its Light in the Abſence of the Sun. The Angel, that was in this Cloud, was their Guide to lead them in the tedious Wandrings of their Way, and was their Guard againſt the Dangers that might annoy or infeſt them. God's Name was upon it, and it moved by his Authority, and was a Symbol, and Viſible Means, as well as a Repreſentment, of his conſtant Watchfulneſs and Care over them. By its Coolneſs and Shade, they were ſhelter'd from the ſcorching Heats of the *Arabian* Deſerts; and by its environing them round, they were ſecured from the Purſuits of the enraged *Egyptians*, and the Annoyance of all other Enemies whatſoever.

I must leave your own Thoughts and Experiences, to accommodate all this to the kindly Influences of that Government, under which we live; under whose Protection, and comfortable Shade, we sit safe and easie, and enjoy every thing that can sweeten our Passage through the Wilderness of this, or open us a hopeful Prospect into the other, World; by which we have a blessed Opportunity, if we will gratefully improve it, to lead peaceable and quiet Lives in all Godliness and Honesty.

For, though it be true in the General, that since God left off to converse with Men, by the visible Intercourse of Angels, there can be no fitter Representment of his constant Presence than by a Soveraign Magistrate; by whom God rules, though in more Humane Ways, and who is the Ordinary Means of conveying many of his publick Blessings to this lower World. Yet this We, of this Nation, have special Obligations to appropriate to our selves, and to esteem him that now fills the Throne, as the Angel, or Minister, of God to us for Good.

We shall grow unworthy of Blessings which we refuse to own, and in vain do we

expect

expect that Heaven ſhould ſmile on us afreſh, if we continue Clouded under ſullen and ungrateful Paſſions. Remember we that the murmuring and diſcontented *Iſraelites* did blaſt their own growing Happineſs; and their mutinous Deſigns, of chuſing new Captains, cut them ſhort of their Happineſs in the Promiſed Land.

Let Iſrael *then rejoyce in Him that made Him, and let the Children of* Sion *be joyful in their King.*

A Prince, who is Great and Free, as ever Monarch on the *Engliſh* Throne; but yet Great and Free, as thoſe good Angels are, that preſide over Humane Affairs, who cannot bend their Power to do Miſchief, or Annoy.

A Prince, ſo far from affecting Arbitrary Power, that He is juſt beyond the Impeachment of Malice, and merciful, beyond either Merit or Example; and who out-does the Excellency and Goodneſs of the *Engliſh* Conſtitution, by His ſingular Temper in the Adminiſtration of it.

A Prince, who, like an Angel of God, is wiſe, to diſcern between Good and Evil; and can judge truly what Intrigues or Deſigns

ſigns are carried on, by demure Pretenders, to an Oak of Reformation, a Pilgrimage of Grace, or a True Proteſtant League or Aſſociation; Who diſtinguiſhes eaſily and exactly between the Sacred and Genuine Goſpel of Chriſt, and the *Evangeliam Armatum* of the Jeſuits, the Republicans, or the *Leviathan*; and whoſe Senſes are ſo well exerciſed in the Manage of His Authority, as to tell, with wonderful Sagacity, when Tenderneſs of Conſcience is a pityable Infirmity, and when it is a ſtubborn and naughty Diſeaſe.

A Prince Who is Patient, almoſt beyond Provocation, and Generous, beyond Deſert; and Who can deny us nothing, but a Liberty to undo our ſelves; and Who ſeems reſolved that, even in ſpite of our ſelves, He will make us Happy.

A Prince Who, like *Moſes*, was preſerved, amidſt wondrous Providences, to reſcue us from the Slavery and Miſery under which we groan'd; and Who, like him too, is as meek as any upon Earth; And when He returned from Exile to Empire, happily defeated an old Prophecy of bad Portent,

------Regnabit Sanguine multo
Ad Regnum quiſquis venit ab Exilio.

Vide Sueton. *in* Tiberio, & Caſaubon *in locum*, p. 404.

And did neither enter, nor reign in Blood.

Such is the Prince, whom God, This Day, firſt brought into the World, and, This Day, brought back to His own, and His Father's Throne; and ſuch it was fit That Prince ſhould be, Who was ſent, and deſigned by God, to calm a ſtormy World, and to reſtore Peace and Plenty, Laws and Religion, to theſe diſtracted Nations. *Talem eſſe oportuit, Quem non Bella Civilia, non Armis oppreſſa Reſpublica, ſed Pax & Adoptatio, & tandem exorata terris numina dediſſent.* Such it was fit He ſhould be Whom, not the fatal Skirmiſhes of Civil War, not a Mutinous and Fanatick Army, not popular Violence, or partial Election, but Peace and Juſtice, and Sacred Inherent Right, and the Mercies of Heaven, at length, liſtning to its pious Votaries on Earth, did advance to a Throne.

Plin. *in* Pan.

And what now remains, but That we all bleſs the Lord, and walk ſo worthy of his Divine Favour and Love, that he may ſtill rejoyce over us, to do us good; And That, for the ſake and according to the Precepts of that God, we obey and heartily reverence the King; and That, in warm Duty and Gratitude to the Crown, we chearfully come

come in, and zealouſly take part with it, againſt all Hands that would ſhake its Stability, or Tongues that would darken or diminiſh its Luſtre; That we be forward and ready, upon all occaſions, not only to ſupport and guard, but to eaſe and oblige, the Throne, and to ſweeten (what we may) the Burden of that Royal and Gracious Government, under whoſe Shadow we rejoyce.

And Thou, O Father of Lights! Grant that, as this Day twice *eminently did, ſo this, and all his Days, for long and many Years, may riſe proſperous and happy to our* David, *and his Houſe, that He, and They, and We, all may gratefully rehearſe thy Mercy, and declare thy Goodneſs, and ever rejoyce in thy Salvation.* Amen.

F I N I S.